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2 July 1956

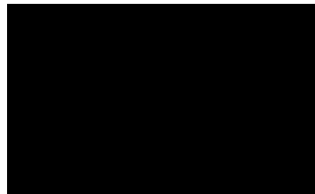
SNIE 100-2-56

MEMORANDUM TO THE BOARD

1. Herewith a preliminary draft of SNIE 100-2-56, on Hoaxes. It is obviously incomplete, and is designed chiefly to start discussion. The main problem will be to make a paper which will be useful without violating security. I do not believe it possible to write any paper covering this subject, of whatever classification, which will fulfill the requirements and yet will not violate security. The present draft is a first attempt to see whether something can be done within TOP SECRET limits. If it looks useful, we could proceed to enrich it with new ideas and further details, and to get it made correct; I do not pretend that everything said in this draft is true. Part III is especially recalcitrant.

2. You may wish to look at the Terms of Reference, dated 9 March 1956.

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*pages 16 & 27
revised 12 July*

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SUBJECT: SNIE 100-2-56: ENEMY CAPABILITIES TO MISLEAD THE US
(Preliminary Draft)

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the ability of US intelligence to cope with enemy attempts to mislead and misinform in a manner or on a scale which would threaten US national security.

SCOPE

This estimate, which differs radically from the normal national intelligence estimate, owes its origin to a recommendation made by the Killian Committee and NSC Action 1430. Specific recommendation C.4. of the Killian Report reads as follows:

"We need to examine intelligence data more broadly, or to invent some new technique, for the discovery of hoaxes. As a first step, we recommend a National Intelligence Estimate, with adequate safeguards, of our success in keeping secret our most useful techniques of intelligence. This estimate would suggest the extent to which an enemy might be manipulating the information obtained through these sources."

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I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. In its efforts to defeat the aims of US and allied intelligence, the Sino-Soviet Bloc almost certainly relies chiefly on its remarkably effective security system, which enables it simply to withhold information concerning its strengths, weaknesses, capabilities, and intentions. It may also, however, attempt to plant false information, or to distort and color authentic data, in order to mislead and deceive foreign intelligence. Finally, it may disseminate large amounts of information, not necessarily false, in order to overshadow and obscure particular items which would, if recognized for what they were worth, be of paramount importance to US security. This paper is concerned not primarily with the ability of US intelligence to penetrate the Bloc security system, but rather with its ability to discover and discount deliberate hoaxes and deceptions which may be attempted by the Communist powers.

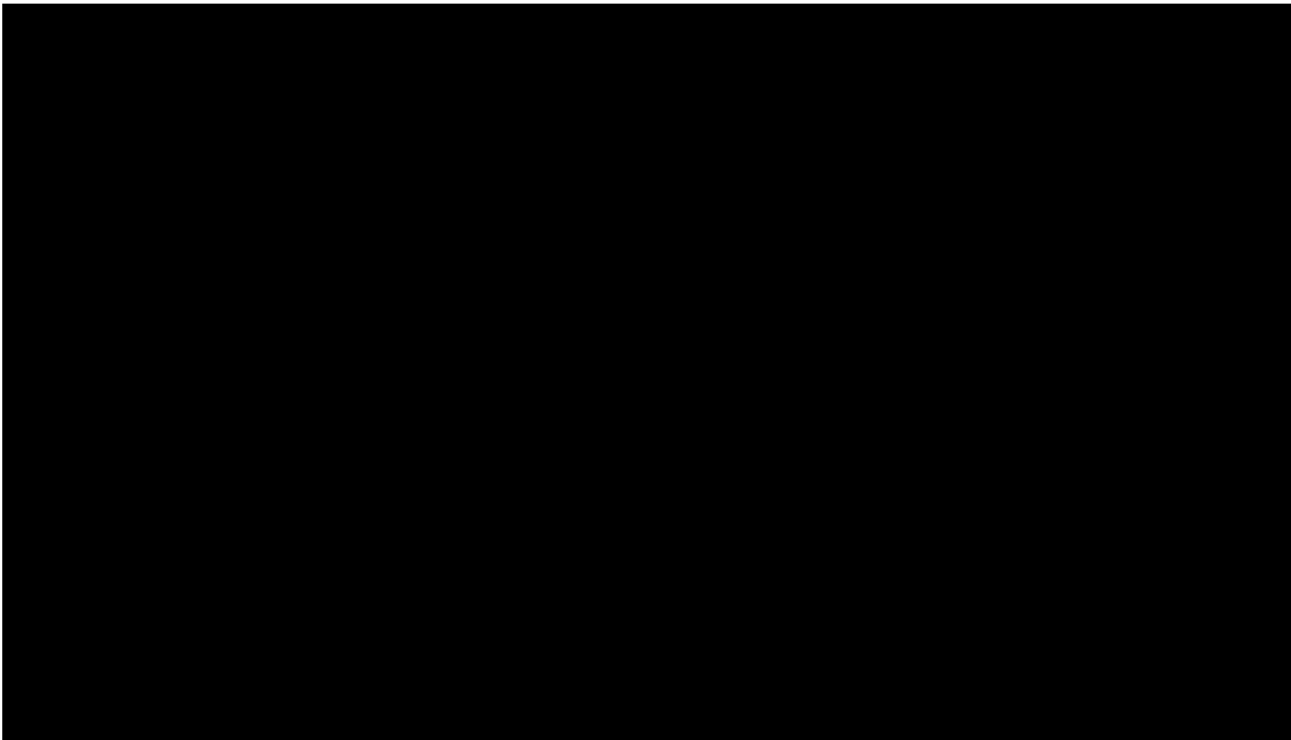
2. The US does not possess any method of intelligence collection or analysis which is wholly unknown to the Bloc, or any method which is completely free from susceptibility to deception or hoax. This is not to say that the Bloc is aware of the extent to which the US employs each of its various intelligence methods, or of their application to particular problems, or of the success with which they are used, or in all instances of the degree of advancement which a particular

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technique has reached. Neither is it true that all intelligence methods are equally susceptible to hoax; under some conditions photographs, for example, or the direct observation of competent witnesses, may furnish evidence which is for all practical purposes incontrovertible. It does mean that US intelligence must constantly guard against the possibility of deception, and must always consider that a good deal of the data available to it may be the product of deliberate falsification.

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4. US intelligence officers are, of course, aware of the possibility that they may be the recipients of information intended to deceive. Each piece of data concerning the Sino-Soviet Bloc is examined with a particularly critical and skeptical eye. In the more technical branches of intelligence research, investigation is constantly in progress to ascertain the possibilities of deception, to devise methods for defeating them, and to invent new means of intelligence collecting which may, for a time at least, be relatively immune from hoax. This awareness of the danger is the first line of defense against

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